

**IN THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

***Listing of the Claims:***

**Claims 1-12 (Canceled).**

**Claim 13 (currently amended):** A microfabrication method, comprising:  
first forming a resist pattern on a cobalt-platinum alloy layer to be etched;  
forming a patterned tantalum mask on said cobalt-platinum alloy comprising  
sputtering a tantalum mask layer using a tantalum target; and  
reactive dry etching said cobalt-platinum alloy layer using said tantalum mask, under  
a first reaction gas comprising carbon monoxide and a nitrogen containing gas, wherein  
said cobalt-platinum alloy layer is selectively etched

~~The method of claim 11, further comprising:~~  
~~prior to said forming a patterned tantalum mask, first forming a resist pattern on said~~  
~~cobalt-platinum alloy layer; and~~  
~~sputtering a tantalum mask layer using a tantalum target.~~

**Claim 14 (previously presented):** The method of claim 13, said sputtering comprising sputtering under a gas comprising argon.

**Claim 15 (currently amended):** A microfabrication method, comprising:  
first forming a resist pattern on a cobalt-platinum alloy layer to be etched;  
forming a patterned tantalum nitride mask on said cobalt-platinum alloy layer  
comprising reactive-sputtering a tantalum nitride mask layer using a tantalum target under  
a second reaction gas comprising at least a nitrogen containing gas; and  
reactive dry etching said cobalt-platinum alloy layer using said tantalum nitride  
mask, under a first reaction gas comprising carbon monoxide and a nitrogen containing  
gas, wherein said cobalt-platinum alloy layer is selectively etched

~~The method as claimed in claim 12, further comprising:~~  
~~prior to forming a patterned tantalum nitride mask, first forming a resist pattern on~~  
~~said~~  
~~cobalt-platinum layer; and~~  
~~reactive-sputtering a tantalum nitride mask layer using a tantalum target under a~~  
~~second reaction gas comprising at least a nitrogen containing gas.~~

**Claim 16 (currently amended):** A microfabrication method, comprising:  
first forming a resist pattern on a cobalt-platinum alloy layer;  
forming a patterned tantalum nitride mask on said cobalt-platinum alloy layer to be  
etched comprising sputtering a tantalum nitride mask layer using a tantalum nitride target;  
and

reactive dry etching said cobalt-platinum alloy layer using said tantalum nitride mask, under a first reaction gas comprising carbon monoxide and a nitrogen containing gas, wherein said cobalt-platinum alloy layer is selectively etched

~~The method as claimed in claim 12, further comprising:  
prior to said forming a patterned tantalum nitride mask, first forming a resist pattern on said cobalt-platinum alloy layer; and  
sputtering a tantalum nitride mask layer using a tantalum nitride target.~~

**Claim 17 (previously presented):** The method of claim 16, said sputtering comprising sputtering under a gas comprising argon.

**Claim 18-25 (canceled):**

**Claim 26 (previously presented):** The method of claim 13, further comprising:  
after said sputtering, removing from said cobalt-platinum alloy layer, said resist pattern having said mask layer deposited thereon, to form a patterned mask.

**Claim 27 (previously presented):** The method of claim 15, further comprising:  
after said sputtering, removing from said cobalt-platinum alloy layer, said resist pattern having said mask layer deposited thereon, to form a patterned mask.

**Claim 28 (previously presented):** The method of claim 16, further comprising:  
after said sputtering, removing from said cobalt-platinum alloy layer, said resist  
pattern having said mask layer deposited thereon, to form a patterned mask.